

BALLAD
NEWSLETTER
2019



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Editors' Musings

I don't yet know how you rate 2019, but for me it has been just a little frustrating; no amend that, it has been very frustrating! Being employed, means that much of my sailing is confined to the weekends – until next season – and I can't recall how many times during the last season that I have called off a day's sailing, or a weekend trip to Salcombe or Fowey, because the weather turned foul on the Friday! Is this just my impression, or have you all felt it?

That said, I have done a fair amount of 'yachting', crewing in other peoples' boats, and I use the term 'yachting' deliberately because, 'sin of all sins', I have on a number of occasions moved to the 'dark side' to help an old friend who happens to have acquired a 33 foot Aquastar motor yacht. Yes, we all make mistakes, and yes, it is very noisy under way, and it had a worrying propensity, on several occasions, to lose its port engine, but friends are friends after all, and I won't be buying one any time soon! Returning to achievements this year, I failed to make VIVACIOUS ready for the Ballad Nationals, yet again, and I failed to make a trip to Ouistreham for the 75th anniversary commemoration of the Normandy landings, but I did manage trips to Falmouth, Fowey, Weymouth, Poole, Lymington, Littlehampton and Brighton. What did you do? Please send me a couple of pages, with photographs, of what you have done for the

next newsletter. Share your Ballad achievements with the rest of the Association.

Now a challenge, but first, as an introduction, a story about spatial awareness. In my first season of sailing VIVACIOUS in 2003, I was out one sunny Saturday (yes, on a couple of Saturdays each season the sun shines and it is flat and warm), and my wife Liz was with me (because it was flat and warm!). We had had a delightful day sailing across to Cawsand for a 'picnic lunch at anchor'. After lunch and a spot of sunbathing, I weighed anchor, and set off across the Sound in a north easterly direction towards Mountbatten and the River Plym, to return to my then mooring. The wind was a light south easterly, and the tide was flooding. I was therefore on a starboard tack flying just the No 1 Genoa, you know, the Ballad sail which, without gymnastics, completely obscures your vision to leeward!

Here I must digress for a moment to explain that I had, at the outset briefed Liz to let me know if anything was coming towards us on the blind side. Every time she told me something was approaching, I would duck under the genoa to have a look, only to find, nine times out of ten, that the offending vessel was on the far side of the Sound! I exaggerate, just a little! Anyway, I asked Liz to concentrate on boats that were a little closer! So, there was a dramatic reduction in reports and the crew (Liz) settled down to enjoy the ride and the scenery.

VIVACIOUS was sailing well, achieving about 4 knots, but she was being set to port by wind and tidal stream, and I didn't see the starboard-hand Bridges beacon. There was a loud bang as the platform on top of the beacon took out my port cap shroud and shredded the No 1 Genoa! I quickly secured the Main halyard to the port deck edge to stabilise the rig, and thought, thank goodness I didn't have the Main up as well! I started the engine and had Liz steer towards Mountbatten as I recovered what was left of the No 1

Genoa. The moral of the story? Make sure that you constantly have in mind the effect of wind and tide, and where your nearest danger is, be it ship or shore – spatial awareness! I almost lost the rig and seriously endangered both boat and crew! Ironically the deflection of the port spreader as the cap shroud snagged the beacon platform, dented the mast and compromised mast strength. As a result, the mast was condemned and VIVACIOUS sports a new silver anodised mast and boom!

Now the challenge! I challenge all of you Ballad owners to search your memories, and your log books, to identify incidents resulting from mistakes such as mine above, and to share your lessons identified, and hopefully, learnt.

For the Love of an Albin Ballad

Shara of York's voyage from Malta to Cornwall

Part 1- Finding her to launch.

In January 1976 Peter and I raced Balladier in Falmouth harbour in a frostbite series. We were down in Falmouth for New Year and Peter knew her owners, John and Sue Mantle, from growing up in the area and all of them being members of RCYC. When I volunteered as they were short of crew, I was told by the wives of the owner & other crew members, that I would get cold, wet and shouted at and that I shouldn't cry!! I was also asked what I would do about cooking Sunday lunch if I went racing. My reply was that either the cooker would have to have a timer, or we didn't have Sunday lunch. I think times have now changed.

In 1982 when Peter and I decided to buy a boat we chose to buy a Ballad having looked at other similar designs and deciding that the Ballad was by far the best cruiser/racer and a very “pretty” boat. Our decision may have also been swayed by there being 4 Ballads at SSC some of which we had raced on as crew both locally and in the Plymouth Offshore Points Series.

We looked at Computer Yachts site and found a Ballad for sale in Malta at a very reasonable price. We had looked at a couple of boats in England, including Aquaries III, but they were too immaculate for us to race. (Aquaries III joined SSC shortly after we bought Shara of York!) When I learned the name of the yacht, I told Peter that we would have to change it! Apparently, this is bad luck and, if you do, the boat must be craned out of the water and you have to explain to her why you are changing the name. Anyway, nothing could happen before we got her back to England.

Having put in an offer and it being accepted, we had 2 weeks before the time off work that we already had booked. Not much time to plan the voyage including flights to Malta and the route we were planning on taking. Also considering what supplies we may need and whether these would be readily available in Malta. In the end Peter, who flew out with 2 friends 2 days before I could, took all sorts of tools and other equipment with him including flares! What we got away with on flights in those days!

Shara had been lying in Manoel Boat Yard for 2 years having been abandoned after her previous owner had sailed her around the Mediterranean with various things going wrong and not managing to repair them. On first seeing her, I thought that Peter had gone mad. The hull had flaking red antifouling on, the topsides and deck were covered in 2 years’ worth of dust, the cabin looked like a junk yard and the whole boat had the air of a Marie Celeste!



Picture 1, 2 7 3: SHARA at first sight

Peter and 2 friends had already been in Malta for 2 days. During this time, they had taken the engine out and tripped it down but couldn't

get it to work. They had also checked & re-wired the electrics where necessary including fixing a masthead tricolour. None of the other navigation lights worked and 2 saucers holding candles with glasses covered in either red or green tape and smoky insides were found- how to improvise when you have broken light fittings and no power!



4, 5&6: What lay within

The next task was to locate a long shaft outboard on the island and to fit an outboard bracket on Shara's stern.

We had a further 2 days before the planned launch & in this time the boat was cleaned down below, sails, sheets and halyards were all checked and re-packed and provisions for several days at sea were bought & carefully stowed. Two new batteries were purchased but we would have no means of recharging them.

One of our friends had to leave & go back to work. Peter and I had 2 weeks annual leave & they we were already using these up. The other friend, Mike Todd, had a job in education so had school summer holidays and he had agreed to sail Shara back with us- as far as we could get in our time limit! So, at 2pm on Tuesday 27th July Shara was craned in with us all watching & praying that the sea cocks were okay and she wouldn't sink. She floated!!



Picture 6

We used the outboard to put Shara on a nearby mooring & that evening we cooked and ate supper onboard getting accustomed to our new surroundings & how everything worked. (The cooker was like a flame thrower).

And then we turned in trying to get some much-needed sleep prior to an early start the next day when we would drop the mooring & set sail across the Mediterranean heading for Sete in the south of France.





Picture's 7, 8 & 9: SHARA's relaunch

Next leg in the 2020 newsletter!!

UK Ballad Championships 2019, Royal Cornwall Yacht Club, Falmouth

Summertime and Duchess made good time from Plymouth to Falmouth on Friday 24th May, mooring up at Falmouth Yacht Haven around 1800hrs. Shebeen had sailed down the previous day making

very good time and having a pleasant voyage. Shara of York left Saltash a couple of hours behind Summertime and Duchess but arrived in Falmouth in time to register at RCYC and to listen to the Skippers Briefing. Alert, David Stevens, being a local yacht had no trouble in being on time for the briefing. This made the 5 yachts taking part in this year's event.

The excellent sailing supper provided by RCYC for their own racing yachts was superb on this Friday evening and was also enjoyed by all the Ballad sailors, happily meeting up again. Chris Davis, our Race Officer for the weekend, commented on the 'buzz' we created in the bar at the club.

For the first race on Saturday morning, Falmouth Bay showed a distinct lack of wind and Jenny enjoyed reading her book from 10:45 until 11:30, while Grace (aged 10) on Alert played her music and the rest of us dozed! Channel 77 narrated changing wind speeds and directions. Eventually a course was laid and we all set off. There was a very exciting start where Duchess tacked in front of Shara of York and surprised them by not luffing them over the line. The tactic of going for speed surprised both Shara and Duchess when Peter Noakes' attempts to sail down and cover Duchess resulted in Duchess overtaking to leeward. Apparently great discussions and consternation occurred on Shara (something to do with buckets and foul play!), but also on Duchess who were worried about deception tactics!



“Duchess” hoists her spinnaker

Duchess convincingly pulled ahead throughout the first triangle and looked unbeatable (see photos!). However, the prevailing wind and the sea breeze were still competing with each other, and Shara sailed past a stationary Duchess. Then Shebeen demonstrated their true gentlemanly nature and gave Duchess somewhat disputable water at the windward mark. Summertime, spotting all three stationary boats at the mark and, still having way-on, ignored any rules and nipped

inside everyone, smiling sweetly, and gybed round the mark picking up the new wind and sailing to a convincing win.



Duchess 'flying'

We were all delighted to welcome David Stevens and Alert, who competed in the White Sail Division. David, a member of Royal Cornwall YC was sailing in home waters, crewed by his 10-year-old granddaughter, Grace. It was the first time he had taken part in the championship so, being nervous about the racing rules, he recruited Richard Bown (who many will remember sailing Toby Dee out of St

Mawes many years ago now) at the Friday evening briefing. The three of them enjoyed some delightful sailing on the Saturday.



Shara and Summertime almost neck and neck

After a very short 30-minute break, the second start took Summertime and Duchess (Janie on the loo) by surprise. The wind had come up and a 'gripping' race was had by all. Shara won, followed by Duchess, Summertime and then Shebeen.



And then there were three

Saturday night's barbecue was attended by the majority of Ballad crew with several friends and former Ballad owners as well as club members. It was a pleasant evening, if slightly chilly, and most managed to eat out by the water's edge partaking of the lovely view (and with blankets on offer!). A wide-ranging choice of delicious food was offered and there were seconds for those who were hungry after the day's exertions.

Sunday's strong winds brought everybody's foul weather gear on deck and showed **OUR** Falmouth Bay occupied by two enormous tankers/cargo ships – one orange, one green. The poor mark layers had difficulty deciding where to lay the marks to offer a suitable course! However, they succeeded in completing this task and the racing was underway in good time.

Shara of York convincingly led both races, leaving Summertime, Duchess and Shebeen to exchange tacks and places. Duchess managed to be over the line for both starts but made great efforts to

recover (too keen or too inept?!). Unfortunately, Shebeen had halyard problems in the afternoon winds and had to retire from race 4. Catherine, onboard Shara, had calculated the results at the end of the 3rd race and realised that, in order to win overall, they still had to beat Summertime in the last race, so the crew had no rest!

The results were as follows:

Place	Race 1	Race 2	Race 3	Race 4
1st	Summertime	Shara of York	Shara of York	Shara of York
2nd	Shara of York	Duchess	Summertime	Summertime
3rd	Duchess	Summertime	Duchess	Duchess
4th	Shebeen	Shebeen	Shebeen	Shebeen

Tim and Penny Burne and Richard and Jeannie Bown joined Chris Davis for the exceptional Prize Giving dinner. The food and service really were outstanding and any Ballads not attending missed out! David and Grace Stevens- Alert received the new Corinthian Cup, donated by Geoff and Ros Wheeler. Peter Morgan, RYC Commodore, presented the prizes which included embroidered sailing caps and engraved glasses for all entrants. Alert also received the Endeavour Trophy.

Shebeen set off at 1000 for the Bank Holiday Monday Pursuit Race, followed 7 minutes later by Duchess and then 2 minutes later by Shara of York. (Summertime were taking the opportunity of a few days holiday in a lovely location). All 3 yachts that were taking part flew spinnakers on a port pole, but after 45 minutes of heavy work Duchess opted for the No 2 jib alone. The two spinnakers valiantly sailed on to Cannis Rock off Fowey, which was the finish line. Shara was 'smelling blood' but Shebeen finished ahead at 12:40, before changing course southwards and continuing back to her home port of Poole.

Trophies awarded:

Jean Ellis Memorial Trophy	First overall	Peter Noakes (Shara of York)
Upper Deck Trophy	Second overall	Chris Tyrrell (Summertime)
Toms Trophy	Third overall	Janie Smallridge (Duchess)
Noakes & Habermehl Trophy	Furthest travelled	Ken Morgan (Shebeen)
Corinthian Cup	White Sail winner	David Stevens (Alert)
Variety Trophy	Best Endeavour	David Stevens (Alert)
Old Ferry Inn Trophy	Pursuit Race Winner	Ken Morgan (Shebeen)

Parish Notices

Ballad Windows Plea

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The following notice appeared in the 2018 Newsletter, and I can report that I received no responses to pass on to Michael Sneary. Surely some of you have some advice to give!?

“Michael Sneary’s VARIETY, has a common Ballad problem, corrosion of her window frames, and Michael believes that they may be beyond repair. If anyone can advise on repair or replacement, please let me know on t.t.h.v.clark@btinternet.com I will pass any advice received direct to Michael and include it in next year’s newsletter.”

Subscriptions

Have you paid your Ballad association subscription for 2019? If not, please pass your £6.00 to Janie Smallridge as soon as you are able. Thank you